

1 **REMARKS**

2 In the August 25, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner provisionally rejected claims 1-28  
3 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable  
4 over the pending claims of co-pending application no. 09/883,854. Applicant has amended the  
5 pending claims to more clearly define the claimed invention and further clarify the distinctness  
6 from the claims presented in co-pending application serial no. 09/883,854. Accordingly, applicant  
7 respectfully submits that, as now presented, claims 1-4, 10, 13-19, 25 and 28-37 are patentably  
8 distinct from the claims presented in co-pending application serial no. 09/883,854.

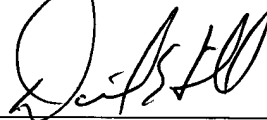
9 Specifically, the present claimed invention is directed at an automated apparatus for  
10 retrieving and ionizing samples for analysis whereby a robotic interface controls a capillary such  
11 that one of its ends may be positioned to accept a sample from any of a plurality of locations on a  
12 sample tray to be ionized and introduced into a mass analyzer for analysis.

13 Alternatively, the invention claimed in co-pending application serial no. 09/883,854 is  
14 directed at automating an atmospheric pressure ionization (API) source for a mass spectrometer  
15 whereby a robot interfaced with the API source retrieves and ionizes samples for analysis by  
16 positioning the API source such that it (i.e., the API source) may accept a sample from any of a  
17 plurality of locations on a source tray and then re-positioning the API source such that it may  
18 introduce ions of the sample into an inlet end of a fixed capillary for transport into a first vacuum  
19 region of a mass spectrometer.  
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1           In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention, as  
2           claimed, represents a patentable contribution to the art and the application is in condition for  
3           allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,



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